

# So this is Wealth

Why is our friend Pierre willing to track down and embrace the skunk, stench included? Because to him the skunk is Wealth. There are few things man will not do for Wealth. Certainly we work for it; but we will even steal, beg, cheat, lie, and murder for it. It would seem, then, that Wealth is important; but what is it? The Polekotist (Political Economist) defines it: Wealth is all material things upon which human energy (Labor) has been exerted to better fit them for the satisfaction of the desires of other men.

As long as ladies desire fine furs, Pierre's malodorous skunk will be Wealth. It is material, Pierre labored to catch it (and his breath), and it will satisfy the desires of fine ladies. The meat of the skunk will not satisfy a human desire, and it is doubtful whether its odor will. So neither skunk meat nor odor is Wealth. But the fur is desired and it is therefore Wealth.

A walking stick, beautifully carved by the village ne'er-do-well who whittles to pass the time, isn't Wealth because only his own desires were satisfied by his Labor. If, by chance, some other human should want to own the stick, and want it badly enough to exchange some of his own Wealth for it, the stick -- according to our definition -- would become Wealth; simply because some other human's desires were satisfied by the product of the whittler.

And some things that are the results of human energy and satisfy human desires are not Wealth because they are not material things. A kiss, the beauty of a flattering haircut, the cool luxurious sensation that results from being fanned by a tireless Egyptian slave, the relief from pain produced by the skilled hands of the capable doctor or dentist, these are not material, and consequently not Wealth to the Polekotist.

But all material things that satisfy human desires are not Wealth. The Grand Canyon, the pine-scented mountain air, the salty tang of the ocean, and the pink sands of Bermuda -- are material. Hordes of tourists give up much of their Wealth to enjoy these things; so they must satisfy human desires. But they are not Wealth because they were produced by the forces of Nature and not by human energy (Labor).

Immediately after the shooting stopped in 1945 pleas for help came from destitute Europe. American friends and relatives knew the best cure for poverty is Wealth, so they sent what money they could spare. They were amazed to learn, by return mail, that American money was worthless over there. The Europeans wanted butter, oil, salt, sugar, crackers, flour, clothing, and tobacco. In other words, they wanted real Wealth; the material things that satisfy human desires.

